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## **MARYLAND ENERGY ADMINISTRATION “EMPOWERS CLEAN ENERGY COMMUNITIES” WITH UP TO \$9M FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS BENEFITTING LOW AND MODERATE INCOME MARYLANDERS**

*Sixth Year of Energy Assistance Grants to Help Maryland Families*

**Annapolis, Maryland** (October 25, 2013) — The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) opened the 2014 EmPOWERing Clean Energy Communities Low-to-Moderate Income Grant Program, with up to \$9 million available through competitive grants to local governments and nonprofit organizations. This will be the sixth consecutive year of this program, which was designed to help local governments and nonprofits fund energy efficiency projects that benefit low-to-moderate income Marylanders. The program has lowered energy costs for thousands of Marylanders and helped employ members of Maryland's building performance trades. Funding for the program comes from the Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF), which was created from public auctions of carbon credits through the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI).

“MEA is pleased to provide enhanced funding for the EmPOWERing Clean Energy Communities Low-to-Moderate Income Grant Program,” said MEA Director, Abigail Ross Hopper. “The grants provide critical energy savings for Maryland families but also bring us closer to our EmPOWER energy consumption reduction goal of 15% by 2015.”

In addition to lowering energy costs for financially struggling families, as well as those institutions that serve our most vulnerable neighbors, the program advances the State's goals of reducing electricity consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. Past grantees have successfully used their funds to improve energy efficiency measures through weatherization, air sealing and insulation for senior housing, homeless shelters and residential homes. The energy measures installed through this program to date are estimated to be saving Maryland residents over \$3.35 million in avoided electricity and natural gas costs annually.

Over the past few years, more than 200 grants have been awarded in each of Maryland's counties helping more than 9,000 households, 2 homeless shelters and over 30 homes for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities save energy and money with this program. To ensure an equitable distribution of grant funds, each county in Maryland has been appropriated an allocation of EmPOWERing Clean Energy Communities grant funds based on the number of low-to-moderate income households in the county. Grant funds will be awarded competitively within the applicant pool for each respective county.

For fiscal year 2014, the Maryland Energy Administration anticipates being able to offer two platforms of funding for the EmPOWERing Clean Energy Communities Low-to-Moderate Income Grant Program.

- 1) The “traditional” program that has been available since 2009; and

- 2) A new competitive program that seeks innovative ideas and solutions for buildings, communities, or neighborhoods.

The grant applications, as well as a detailed grant instruction documents, are available on MEA's website at <http://energy.maryland.gov/Govt/empowercleanenergycommunities.html>. Applications are due to MEA by Saturday, November 30, 2013.

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The Maryland Energy Administration's (MEA) mission is to assist Maryland citizens and businesses to save money through smart investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy and conservation. A Maryland state agency, MEA fuels the creation of green jobs by providing funds and resources to expand the use and availability of clean, safe energy in Maryland.